

Message Text

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ACTION SS-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0688
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 5019

LIMDIS

LONDON FOR SONNENFELDT

PARIS FOR HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)
SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S VISIT

1. THIS MESSAGE IS MEANT AS BACKGROUND FOR
SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT TO ROMANIA NOVEMBER
3-4. IN IT WE ASSESS THE PRESENT MOOD IN BUCHAREST
AND DISCUSS LIKELY EVOLUTION OF ROMANIAN POLICY,
BOTH IN THE LIGHT OF US INTERESTS.

2. THE SECRETARY WILL FIND IN CEAUSESCU NOT ONLY
THAT SHREWD, OPTIMISTIC, PRAGMATIC AND SOMETIMES
HUMOROUS CHIEF OF STATE WHOM HE LAST SAW ALMOST A
YEAR AGO BUT AN INDIVIDUAL STILL MORE OBSESSED WITH
THE PERSONAL MISSION OF LEADING ROMANIA'S HISTORIC
LEAP TOWARD SECURE NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, A MODERNIZED
SOCIETY AND DEVELOPED COUNTRY STATUS BY 1990. THE NEW
ROMANIAN PARTY PROGRAM SET FOR ENDORSEMENT AT THE
11TH CONGRESS IN LATE NOVEMBER TYPIFIES CEAUSESCU'S
ORIGINAL BLEND OF NATIONALISM, MARXISM AND POPULISM,
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THE "ROMANIAN PATH TO SOCIALISM." NATIONALIST THROUGH

HE IS, HE IS AN AVID BELIEVER IN INTERDEPENDENCE AS WELL FOR HE IS BESET BY A SENSE OF ROMANIA'S INFERIORITY AS ONE OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND HAS CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT ROMANIA CAN ACHIEVE HIS GOALS ONLY BY BECOMING A STILL MORE ACTIVE PARTICIPANT, NOT JUST IN EUROPE BUT IN THE WORLD. LIKE NO OTHER IN EASTERN EUROPE, CEAUSESCU'S ONE-MAN SYSTEM IS KEYED TO GOADING HIS COUNTRY THROUGH FORCED-DRAFT MODERNIZATION. SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT, NATIONALISTIC DEFENSIVE MANEUVERS ABROAD AND MOBILIZATION AT HOME ARE ALL PRESENT IN HIS PERSONALITY CULT. SENSING HEAVY WEATHER AHEAD, HE HAS REPORTED INCREASINGLY TO THE FAMILIAR LEVERS OF PATRIOTISM, DISCIPLINE AND UNITY TO BRING IT ALL OFF. DESPITE SUBSTANTIAL OBSTACLES, CONSIDERING HIS SUCCESSFUL TRACK RECORD, ONE IS CHARY OF SECOND GUESSING THE CONTINUED APPLICABILITY OF HIS FORMULA FOR CARRYING ROMANIA THROUGH THE SHOALS OF POST-TITO BALKAN UNCERTAINTIES AND CONTINUING SOVIET PRESSURES.

3. NEVERTHELESS, HIS CULT HAS BEGUN TO FRAY; THERE IS MORE DOUBT AND DISCUSSION THAN BEFORE, THOUGH NOT UNMANAGEABLY SO. GROWTH FACES ROMANIA WITH NEW PROBLEMS NOT NECESSARILY SOLVABLE BY HORTATORY CAMPAIGNS AND CADRE RESHUFFLING. TECHNICIANS AND INTELLECTUALS ARE ALIENATED BY PREVAILING STRICTURES, AS THE CULT'S DRAWBACKS -- HERKY JERKY MANAGEMENT AND STIFLED INITIATIVE -- BECOME CLEARER. CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS ARE LARGELY UNMET. PLAN LAGS MAY GIVE CEAUSESCU'S PEERS MORE REASON TO QUESTION THE REALISM OF HIS DRIVE SINCE 1972 TO SQUEEZE EVEN HARDER FOR OVER-FULFILLMENT. YET HIS CARDS ARE STILL STRONG: HE NOW HOLDS EVERY TOP OFFICE; HIS EGALITARIAN, NATIONALIST INSTINCTS STRIKE A RESPONSE AMONG ORDINARY AND MANY NOT SO ORDINARY ROMANIANS TO WHOM, EASILY LED, LONG-SUFFERING, RUSSIAN-FEARING, HE MUST LOOK VIRTUALLY INDISPENSABLE; HE HAS PROVED A MASTER AT SHIFTING BLAME AND NEUTRALIZING POTENTIAL OPPosition. COLDLY ASSESSED, THEN, CEAUSESCU STILL LOOKS TOUGH AND FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO HANDLE INTERNAL DISCONTENT

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WHILE IMPOSING HIS VISION OF ROMANIA'S FUTURE FOR SOME TIME YET, ALTHOUGH VULNERABILITIES WILL INCREASE.

4. LOOKING AHEAD IN FOREIGN POLICY, THE BASIC QUESTION IS: HAS ROMANIAN MOMENTUM EXHAUSTED ITSELF AGAINST LIMITS POSED BY SOVIET POWER? THE ANSWER IS NO. CLEARLY, AS OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES EXPAND THEIR OWN RELATIONS WITH THE WEST, ROMANIA'S PIONEER-

ING ROLE BECOMES SOMEWHAT LESS IMPRESSIVE, HER
UNIQUELY INDEPENDENT COURSE IS LESS OBVIOUS TO THE
WEST WHEN DRAMATIC JUMPS NO LONGER OCCUR. MOSCOW HAS
SO FAR CONTAINED THE ROMANIAN DEVIATION FAIRLY WELL
IN THE REST OF EASTERN EUROPE, AND EARLIER
ROMANIAN POSITIONS HAVE BEEN SLIGHTLY MUTED. YET
ROMANIA SHOWS NOT THE SLIGHTEST SIGN OF SOFTENING
ITS FUNDAMENTAL ANTAGONISM TO MOSCOW'S IMPERIAL
IMPULSES; CONTROLLED CONFLICT WILL LIKELY PREVAIL
IN IDEOLOGICAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, WARSAW PACT
AND CEMA MATTERS AS BUCHAREST FOLLOWS A "NO REAL
CONFRONTATION, NO FUNDAMENTAL CONCESSION" POLICY UNDER
COVER OF OUTWARDLY CORRECT RELATIONS. CEAUSESCU HAS
FOUND THAT TAPPING WHAT SUPPORT HE COULD FROM THE
U.S. AND CHINA FOR ROMANIA'S COURSE, JOINING THE WORLD
MONETARY SYSTEM, AND STIMULATING TRADE AND INVESTMENT
FROM THE WEST HAVE BEEN ALL VERY WELL BUT NO PANACEA.
WITH ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF HER TRADE WITH THE WEST,
ROMANIA IS MORE EXPOSED TO DIFFICULTIES MARKET
ECONOMIES ARE EXPERIENCING THAN ARE LESS OPEN EE
STATES. ITS LARGE CONVERTIBLE CURRENCY DEBT AND HIGH-
COST CREDIT CRUNCH HURT BUT WITH ITS HIGHLY CENTRAL-
IZED ECONOMY ROMANIA PROBABLY CAN WORK ITS WAY THROUGH

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUCHAREST 5019

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PARIS FOR HARTMAN

THESE DIFFICULTIES. ALTHOUGH HE WILL BE UNABLE TO MOVE TOO MUCH CLOSER TO A YUGOSLAV-TYPE NON-ALIGNED SOCIALISM, CEAUSESCU WILL KEEP ON PUTTING STRONG EMPHASIS ON TIES WITH THE THIRD WORLDS WHERE HE HAS BEEN SO ACTIVE THAT HE SOUNDS SOMETIMES MORE LIKE A NON-ALIGNED THAN WARSAW PACT LEADER (MEANWHILE SEEKING MARKETS, RAW MATERIALS AND POLITICAL SUPPORT, ALL BY WAY OF EXPLORING EVERY POSSIBILITY TO PUSH DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCE THEREBY ROMANIA'S INDEPENDENCE.)

5. THE PRESENT US-ROMANIAN RELATIONSHIP IS HEALTHY ENOUGH. TRADE IS AN OBVIOUS INDICATOR. FROM SIXTH PLACE AMONG ROMANIA'S TRADING PARTNERS IN 1972, THE US IS COMING UP FAST ON THIRD AND BOTH SIDES AIM FOR ONE BILLION DOLLARS IN BILATERAL TRADE BY 1980. DESPITE OCCASIONAL PROBLEMS, CONTACTS ARE EXTENSIVE AND INCREASING IN MANY FIELDS AND NEW ROMANIAN IDEAS (LIKE THE ASTRONAUT PROPOSAL) ARE RARELY LACKING. YET OLD SUSPICIONS OF US GREAT-POWER

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REFLEXES AND TACIT COLLUSION WITH THE SOVIETS ON SPHERES OF INFLUENCE NEVER SEEM ENTIRELY ALLAYED. FOR EXAMPLE, RECENT PRESS ARTICLES DECRYING "HOLY ALLIANCE DETENTE" AND INTERFERENCE IN SMALLER STATES SEEM TO REFER TO WHAT IS CONSIDERED US OVER-EMPHASIS ON DETENTE'S SOVIET COMPONENT AND DEFENSE OF CIA ACTIONS IN CHILE. THE SPECIAL NIXON-CEAUSESCU AURA IS PROBABLY UNRECAPTUREABLE BUT BASING RELATIONS INCREASINGLY ON A WEB OF INSTITUTIONALIZED AND COMMON INTERESTS WILL HAVE ITS OWN STRENGTHS.

6. WHAT WILL A HEALTH ROMANIA BE WORTH TO US FOR THE REST OF THE DECADE? DIVIDENDS INCLUDE (1) HELPING KEEP THE SOVIETS HONEST -- NO OTHER EE COUNTRY IS AS READY TO SPOKE THE SOVIETS' WHEELS IN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, WARSAW PACT OR CEMA; ROMANIAN OBDURACY HAS FREQUENTLY OBLIGED MOSCOW TO SEEK COMPROMISE IN THE PAST, AND ESPECIALLY WHEN TROUBLES BESET THE WEST, INDEPENDENT VOICES IN THE OPPOSITE CAMP ARE USEFUL. (2) A GOOD EXAMPLE OF DETENTE IN EUROPE ON THE SOVIET FRONTIER AND OF MUTUALLY USEFUL INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN SMALL AND LARGE COUNTRIES WITH DIFFERENT SYSTEMS BUT SHARED CONCERNS. (3) BALKAN STABILITY -- ESPECIALLY AFTER TITO EXPIRES, ROMANIAN SUPPORT FOR YUGOSLAVIA AND REFUSAL TO EXPAND WARSAW

PACT/CEMA INTEGRATION ARE A HEDGE AGAINST A PAX SOVIETICA IN THE REGION. (4) CONTINUED ROLE AS INNOVATOR IN EASTERN EUROPE AND BEYOND -- PARTICULARLY IF SOVIET BEHAVIOR IS CONSTRAINED AND DETENTE'S COURSE ALLOWS ROMANIA TO RELAX A BIT MORE. EVEN ROMANIAN COURTSHIP OF THE THIRD WORLD SOMETIMES CAN BE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON THE RADICAL NON-ALIGNED, AS A PARTISAN OF DIVERSITY AND PEACEFUL COOPERATION, AND USEFUL BROKER WHOSE INTEREST IN CALMING LOCAL FLAREUPS OFTEN COINCIDES WITH OURS.

7. THESE DIVIDENDS COME AT MODEST COST. ROMANIANS CAN REALISTICALLY EXPECT NOT MUCH MORE FROM THE U.S. THAN CONTINUATION OF BENEVOLENT BUT LIMITED ACTIONS AS DURING THESE PAST FIVE YEARS - PERIODIC HIGH-LEVEL CONTACT, EVENTUAL MFN, COMMERCIAL ENCOURAGEMENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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RESPECT FOR ROMANIAN INTERESTS IN HOW WE TALK ABOUT AND HANDLE DETENTE, AND OCCASIONAL CREDIT FAVORS. AT SUCH A LEVEL, OUR RELATIONS WITH THE USSR ARE LEFT UNAFFECTED; MOSCOW CURRENTLY ACTS AS IF THE ROMANIAN IRRITANT IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY PROVOCATIVE TO REQUIRE MORE THAN A WAITING GAME -- YET THE U.S. CONNECTION IS VISIBLE AND TANGIBLE ENOUGH TO ADD, IN BUCHAREST'S VIEW, A NEEDED ELEMENT OF DETERRENCE AGAINST THE EVENTUALITY OF MORE AGGRESSIVE SOVIET BEHAVIOR AND OF PARTICIPATION IN ROMANIA'S AMBITIOUS GOALS.

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